United Nations A/C.1/49/PV.3

General Assembly
Forty-ninth session

Official Records

First Committee

3rd Meeting
Monday, 17 October 1994, 10 a.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Valencia-Rodríguez . . . . . (Ecuador)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Statement by the Chairman

The Chairman: I have the pleasure and the honour of welcoming to the Disarmament and International Security Committee, the First Committee, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

I also have the pleasure of welcoming to the Committee Mr. Marrack Goulding, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, and Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General.

This morning, in accordance with its programme of work and timetable, the Committee will begin its general debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items.

Statement by the Secretary-General

The Chairman: I should like first to call on the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to address the First Committee.

The Secretary-General: To you, Sir, I offer my congratulations on your appointment as Chairman of the First Committee. With your diplomatic skills and expertise, you are well qualified to guide this Committee through its challenging agenda.

I welcome this opportunity to address the First Committee. I last addressed the Committee during the resumed meetings of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly. That I come to address you again today is an indication and an expression of the importance that I, and the United Nations, attach to the Committee's work.

The First Committee continues to make a major contribution to international security and to the search for a lasting global peace. The past year has confirmed the wisdom of combining in the Committee the consideration of arms control and disarmament with consideration of the wider concerns of international security. The way Member States assess and understand challenges in these areas shapes their response to them. Definition of the challenges, and a coherent understanding of their interconnections, is essential.

Progress in international security and disarmament depends upon the continuation of this integrated approach. Never before has there been such an opportunity for global cooperation towards arms control and disarmament. We must make full use of this opportunity. Not only do arms control and disarmament make the world more secure, but they free up economic, scientific and technological resources for peace and human progress.

Arms control and disarmament agreements can help prevent conflicts. Such agreements also play an important role in containing conflicts, and in peace-keeping and peacemaking. Some agreements are constructed for peace settlements — concerning, for example, disputed territory or resources. Others are designed to ban, limit or regulate weapons and armed forces. Such distinctions, however,

94-86696 (E)

This record contains the original texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Section, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

should not be debilitating. Both types of agreement are integral to the same, overall effort. In working on arms control and disarmament issues, this connection should be seamless. This applies to global, regional and bilateral agreements, whether politically or legally binding.

I set out this way of thinking in my 1992 report on "New Dimensions of Arms Regulation and Disarmament in the Post-Cold War Era". I want to stress that this concept remains valid.

In a similar vein, I should like to mention two other distinctions. One is between global agreements and regional or bilateral agreements. The other is between developed and developing countries. These distinctions are real, and they should inform our efforts — but we cannot allow them to impede our progress.

Bearing this in mind, I should like to refer to specific issues of concern to this Committee.

At its summit meeting in January 1992, the Security Council declared that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction constituted a threat to international security. This declaration has reinforced the resolve of the international community. It has strengthened our commitment to adhere to the global norms enshrined in existing treaties.

I look forward to the entry into force of the chemical weapons Convention. Along with the biological weapons Convention and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), it will complete the triad of global treaties concerning weapons of mass destruction.

There are some 157 signatories to the chemical weapons Convention. I urge Member States to maintain the momentum towards the ratification and early entry into force of this treaty. To the biological weapons Convention, there are 131 signatories. I strongly support the efforts under way to improve the implementation of this Convention.

With 165 signatories, the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty is one of today's global arrangements with the largest number of participants. For the vast majority of the international community, it is the primary normative foundation for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. I call upon all Member States to support the indefinite and unconditional extension of the NPT at the forthcoming Review Conference, in 1995. This will not only strengthen its effective implementation but also speed progress towards the goal of eliminating all nuclear weapons. I look forward to new accessions to the Treaty so that it may become truly universal in acceptance and in practice.

Still more global measures are required, however. I am concerned that negotiations on the comprehensive nuclear-test ban have not progressed as smoothly as I had hoped. I am encouraged by the text of the draft treaty produced by the Conference on Disarmament, but important issues remain unresolved. I strongly urge the participants in these negotiations to work towards a consensus. An early conclusion of a test-ban treaty is fundamental to real progress in nuclear disarmament and to the security of the non-nuclear-weapon States.

Also required is a treaty banning the further production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. Intentions to create such a treaty have been clearly stated, but negotiations on such a treaty have yet to start. We must not allow technical and procedural difficulties to delay negotiations for ever. Now is the time to overcome them. Now is the time to act.

With the NPT, we have seen definitive and positive trends for the quantitative reduction of nuclear weapons. I suggest today that we must now seek to curb qualitative development of such weapons. I believe that a comprehensive test-ban treaty and a treaty on the non-production of fissile material are the most tangible means to that end.

I would also like to stress that there is an urgent need for a binding global a[illegible]eement on security assurances.

As I have mentioned, in the last few years unprecedented strides have been made in actual nuclear disarmament. The United States and Russia have indicated their intention to expedite the implementation of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties (START) with regard to reductions of strategic nuclear weapons. Other nuclear-weapon States have indicated a willingness to make their own contribution to this process. Within this context, the non-nuclear-weapon States demand — rightly, in my view — stronger international and legally binding security assurances.

I firmly believe that there should be no delay in making such assurances. Especially to those States that have pledged to renounce fully and unconditionally the possession and acquisition of nuclear weapons, security assurances must be granted. The nuclear-weapon States

must take the lead in making positive moves towards a binding global agreement on this issue.

All these efforts form a global web of protection against weapons of mass destruction, but they can be successful only with the full commitment and practical participation of all Member States. In my recent meetings with Heads of State and ministers I have stressed the importance of developing new approaches consistent with the present political and security environment. Such approaches are needed, for instance, to provide greater support for the Security Council in its responsibilities concerning weapons of mass destruction.

New approaches are also needed to provide better support to the work of organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The Agency's current initiatives deal with the problem of the security of nuclear materials; they deserve the full support of all Member States. I am in close contact with Mr. Hans Blix, the Director General of the Vienna Agency, on this subject as well as on that of nuclear proliferation in general. Tomorrow, I will meet with him to discuss these issues in further detail. My aim is to ensure the closest possible cooperation between our two offices and to build the necessary political support for the Agency's efforts in these areas.

There have been encouraging developments over the past year which demonstrate the interaction between global and regional dimensions of arms control and disarmament.

I am gratified by the progress achieved by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) towards a treaty on the denuclearization of Africa. Such a treaty will advance global norms.

While much remains to be done, the Middle East process has made substantive progress towards the easing of tensions. This progress is helping to create better conditions for the full implementation of global norms against all weapons of mass destruction in that region. This progress shows what can be achieved when States both inside and outside a region work together on these issues.

At the bilateral level, I am pleased with the intention of the United States and Russia to expedite the reductions of strategic nuclear weapons called for in the START treaties.

Treaties, agreements and regimes give cooperative security arrangements a legal or political foundation, but they must also be built upon firm economic, scientific and technological realities. Accords will be durable and effective so long as they integrate all of these components.

Thus, non-proliferation regimes based on denial alone will not be effective in the long run. To succeed, non-proliferation regimes must be coupled with the transfer of technology for peaceful and legitimate purposes. The Missile Technology Control Regime, for example, should be developed into a cooperative instrument. It should make possible the transfer of advanced technology for peaceful purposes. This suggestion has been made before, but real progress in this direction is yet to be forthcoming.

The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms is intended as a cooperative exercise in confidence-building. In order for it to be successful, the Register must deal with security concerns at both the global and the regional levels.

In this regard, regional entities have an important role to play in making progress in other areas of the process of transparency in armaments. That process is being undertaken through the Conference on Disarmament. I refer specifically here to the transfer of technology with military applications, and to openness and transparency in relation to weapons of mass destruction. The Arms Register is one step towards making more transparent the flow of major conventional arms at the global, regional and subregional levels. I hope this Committee will be able to give the Register the momentum it deserves.

At the same time, we have to face the proliferation of small arms in many countries. Such proliferation is often a residual effect of the cold war or of regional or internal military confrontations.

Recently the President of Mali requested United Nations assistance in dealing with the collection and control of small arms in his country. I dispatched an advisory mission to Mali, which has since provided a list of recommendations to help solve this problem. I intend to push for their speedy implementation.

I also plan to expand the task of the mission to other countries in the same part of the African region. The experience in Mali has shown how action on arms regulation and disarmament can be integrated effectively into the wider field of preventive diplomacy and peace-building.

I cannot end my remarks without reference to the misuse of land-mines. This is a matter of great

humanitarian concern. The misuse of land-mines continues to inflict terrible suffering upon civilian populations, particularly in Africa and Asia.

I am encouraged by the actions a number of Heads of Government have taken on this issue. Today, courageous and professional personnel, provided by Member States, helps the United Nations and affected countries in the dangerous business of mine clearance. I salute their efforts.

Yet the need for international regulation on this issue remains urgent. In my report to the General Assembly on mine clearance I called for an effective control regime. This regime would place strict limits on the production, use and transfer of all land-mines. I trust that this Committee will support efforts to address quickly and effectively this matter of global importance to the lives of thousands of people and its dire consequences.

I welcome views and advice on all these issues. In addition to the insights provided me within the Secretariat, I would like to draw on expertise and experience from outside.

In this context, I value highly the work of my Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters. The Board brings together members with skills and expertise across a wide range of disarmament and international security issues.

My message today is that divisions, however real, must not be allowed to stifle progress in arms control and disarmament.

Unlike other forums, the First Committee considers all types of armaments, as well as their means of delivery, in the full context of international security. The Committee's focus is not limited to a particular weapon or to a particular type of agreement. Through the Committee's work, close coordination between global, regional and bilateral dimensions can be advanced. Agreements and frameworks for action can be constructed which recognize the need for economic, scientific and technological development in a secure world environment.

I look forward to a comprehensive and productive debate in the Committee. I trust that in its deliberations it will continue to advance international security and will continue to make a major contribution to the world's collaborative effort for enduring human progress.

Statement by the Chairman

The Chairman (*interpretation from Spanish*): I would like to draw the attention of the Committee to document A/C.1/49/1, which contains a communiqué addressed to me by the President of the General Assembly to inform us of the allocation of 22 items to the First Committee.

The Committee's analysis of disarmament activities as a fundamental part of international security confirms the priority the United Nations has given to both subjects. Those two elements have always provided the bases for the various plans for international organization that have been prepared by politicians and statesmen. They have been the fundamental motives of thinkers and international activists.

In this context, nuclear disarmament remains one of the priority tasks for the international community in our times. At the forty-eighth session, consensus was reached on fundamental aspects of disarmament and arms limitation. The positive reaction of many States has encouraged the General Assembly to take action and, moreover, clearly attests to the international community's awareness that true disarmament must be attained.

It is encouraging to recall that, responding to the repeated requests of this Committee, the Conference on Disarmament has entered into serious negotiations to obtain an internationally and effectively verifiable comprehensive test-ban treaty, for this will be the most effective way to put an end to such tests. All States should adhere to such an instrument.

I have no doubt that this Committee will provide the necessary support to ensure that the negotiations in the Conference being conducted under the skilful guidance of Ambassador Marín Bosch of Mexico will be crowned with success. This will be an important step towards preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons in all their guises, will contribute to the process of nuclear disarmament and — what is even more important — will strengthen international peace and security.

Similarly, the extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is another question of particular importance. Although it is not being taken up directly in the Committee, our work can contribute to the creation of a propitious atmosphere for the negotiations. The 1995 Conference must respond to the international community's fundamental concerns about the dangers inherent in the proliferation of those weapons.

While there are those who support unconditional extension, many States consider that the extension should be accompanied by certain complementary instruments, such as a comprehensive test-ban treaty and a treaty on the production of fissionable material, as well as assurances for non-nuclear States. Such steps would help to create a favourable atmosphere for a request that the nuclear Powers should make concrete plans for the elimination of their nuclear weapons. On the other hand, as has been said, if the NPT were extended for an indefinite period, that might have the contrary effect of making general and complete disarmament an even more distant objective. It might also result in the continuance of undesirable imbalances. These are very sensitive which are related to vital aspects of national security, so they must be considered in all their aspects and taking into account all their consequences.

It should be noted that at the forty-eightn session of the General Assembly there was consensus on the question of prohibiting the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We must avail ourselves of this opportunity to support the efforts of the Conference on Disarmament to negotiate a treaty on the subject.

There are certain actions that should be undertaken pending the achievement of universal nuclear disarmament. One such action would be the establishment of effective arrangements to guarantee the security of non-nuclear States against the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons. The efforts undertaken by the Conference on Disarmament with a view to achieving this objective should be supported. Moreover, we must bear in mind the fact that a universal approach and regional approaches to disarmament are complementary. Thus, efforts in the two fields should be coordinated.

We again note with concern that the proliferation of conventional weapons is contributing to the expansion of armed conflicts in many regions. In this connection we must emphasize the importance of the Register of Conventional Arms and the need to promote its development. The lack of consensus in the Group of Experts should not result in the abandonment of that important tool for the promotion of transparency. Particular attention should also be given to the problem of the increased proliferation of small-calibre weapons — a problem that is likewise of increasing gravity. In any case, the illegal traffic in armaments, of whatever types, is a disturbing phenomenon that has a serious effect on efforts to consolidate peace. That being the case, the Disarmament Commission is to be commended for the work that it has undertaken.

The preparatory work with regard to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons should be the subject of special consideration in this Committee. No effort should be spared in the drive to achieve universal implementation of that instrument, which will be a decisive advance towards the elimination of weapons of mass destruction.

The item with regard to prohibitions or restrictions on the use of certain conventional weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects is another question of particular importance. We note with satisfaction the information we have received concerning the moratorium on the production and exporting of anti-personnel mines that has already been declared by some States. We must reiterate the particular responsibility that is borne by the manufacturers and exporters of such devices.

It must not be forgotten that attempts to prevent the improper use of technology for military purposes cannot be allowed to impede efforts or legitimate opportunities for development. The international transfer of goods, services and high-tech knowledge for peaceful purposes is important for the economic and social development of many countries.

One of the main organs — the Conference on Disarmament — is discharging its difficult responsibilities with efficiency. As a result of the changes in the world, the time has come for the expansion of the membership of the Conference, taking into account the studies already carried out on this subject. Once again I emphasize that peace, disarmament and security are inseparable. This was acknowledged at the first summit meeting of the Security Council, which was held on 31 January 1992. There it was emphasized that security does not merely imply the absence of military confrontation, that the concept includes also social and economic elements and integral development.

There are various measures that could be considered with a view to promoting and strengthening international security. One of the most important of these consists of preventive diplomacy and urgent measures and, for example, the establishment of appropriate political machinery to ensure the prompt and peaceful solution of disputes. We must not overlook measures to guarantee democracy, protect human rights and promote economic

and social development. Mutual trust can be enhanced by means of, among other things, joint action to promote transparency with regard to questions relating to armaments. Efforts must also be pursued to guarantee the viability of all existing disarmament agreements. All of this leads to our reiterating that it is a matter of urgency that States should shoulder their rightful responsibilities with regard to guaranteeing international security.

The essential purpose of all these efforts must be to achieve general and complete disarmament, the elimination of the nuclear threat and of the proliferation of all kinds of weapons and the development of measures that effectively guarantee international security — in other words, to ensure the undiminished reign of law. Only full respect for the principles enshrined in the Charter can provide the firmest foundation to ensure that humanity may at last find the way to peace and security. I am convinced that, with the cooperation of my fellow representatives, the First Committee of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session will contribute to the achievement of this, our common purpose.

Agenda items 53 to 66, 68 to 72 and 153

General debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items

Mr. Marin Bosch (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): We have listened with all due attention to your statement, Mr. Chairman, and to the statement just made by the Secretary-General. We would like to say how pleased we were to see him present at the beginning of our debate. We agree that we must make the best possible use of the opportunities before us, given the climate in the international community today with regard to disarmament questions, especially regarding weapons of mass destruction.

The delegation of Mexico congratulates you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the work of this First Committee and assures you of its assurances of its active cooperation. It falls upon you to continue and consolidate the reforms of our working methods into what we hope will be a format or organization more in line with the demands of this new stage of the work in the field of disarmament and international security.

We shall limit the length of this statement in accordance with the suggestions made last year by your predecessor, Ambassador Adolf von Wagner of Germany, whose tenacious efforts to rationalize our work have already borne fruit. A shortened general debate will allow us to devote the time saved to a livelier and less formal discussion of the items allocated to us.

We must reduce further the number of resolutions of this Committee and thus continue to improve and prune its agenda without affecting the disarmament priorities on which we have all agreed.

This Committee has the task of establishing guidelines to ensure significant progress in the field of disarmament. Despite the many positive changes, the international scene remains uncertain and there is the risk that unforeseen events may change the present course of multilateral relations. We must therefore quicken the pace of the work and lay solid foundations for negotiations over the coming years, but we shall not achieve this if we remain tied to military doctrines of the past or if we seek to create new areas of tension.

The end of the cold war has signified, among many other things, an opportunity to engage in truly multilateral dialogue, vastly different from that which characterized the bipolar world. Such dialogue is much more democratic and thus much more complicated. We should ensure its success by achieving disarmament measures and by consolidating it through the enlargement of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament under the terms on which agreement was almost reached in 1993.

This Committee should focus its attention on all aspects of the question of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and of vehicles for their delivery. For several years, my delegation has been advocating a frank and constructive dialogue on this issue, both here and in the Conference on Disarmament. Hence our informal consultations at Geneva and our proposal last year, which became resolution 48/75 C, in which the Secretary-General was requested "to prepare a short report containing a brief description" of this question "and to transmit it, no later than 1 May 1994, to a representative intergovernmental group of experts for its consideration and suggestions regarding further study of the question by the international community in various multilateral disarmament forums".

When introducing that text to the Committee we suggested that the intergovernmental group could be the Conference on Disarmament, but the report of the Secretary-General (A/INF/49/3) was distributed only on 20 May and was never submitted to a group of experts. The document which the Secretary-General has sent to us is

therefore incomplete. We regret this and await the explanations which the Secretariat will surely provide us with here.

Mexico's interest in the various aspects of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction was apparent over thirty years ago when Mexico successfully led the negotiations that culminated in the signing of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco). This year, with the important steps taken by Argentina, Brazil and Chile, the announcement made by Cuba and the signature of Saint Kitts and Nevis, the instrument is about to come into full force and for this we may congratulate ourselves.

Mexico is also a party to the biological weapons Convention and is ready to contribute to the identification and drafting of measures, including those on verification and confidence-building, that will ensure full compliance with its provisions. Moreover, we were the first country in this hemisphere to ratify the chemical weapons Convention. During this half of the year, we are also chairing the Preparatory Committee for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. In that capacity, we make a polite and friendly call to signatory States to speed up their respective ratification processes. That will help to increase the rhythm of the work in The Hague.

Mexico is participating actively in the preparation of the 1995 Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). From the beginning we insisted that the preparatory process should cover, in addition to the organizational aspects, the substantive questions regarding the five-year review of the operation of the Treaty and its eventual extension. It was not until its third and penultimate session, held this past September, that the Preparatory Committee finally took up the substantive issues. The exchange of views was useful since it allowed us a glimpse of the different approaches to convening the Conference to be held in just six months.

It is obvious that the States parties to the NPT want a more secure world and a strengthened nuclear non-proliferation regime. But it is also clear that it will be difficult to move in that direction without the determined contribution of all. States with nuclear weapons should announce a series of nuclear disarmament measures and implement them within a specific time-frame. But the States that do not have nuclear weapons must also take concrete steps to avoid the perception, real or imagined, that they are not complying with all the provisions of the NPT. We must all show good faith.

In this regard what can a country such as mine do to strengthen the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons regimes? According to a few countries, nuclear weapons are not intrinsically bad: it all depends on who has them. To a handful of others, nuclear weapons are not an end in themselves, but rather a means to achieve a reasonable degree of national security. However, the most widely held opinion on nuclear weapons is that they represent a threat that must be totally eliminated. Together with other delegations we are exploring the possibility of submitting for consideration by this Committee a proposal aimed at reducing that threat step by step.

There are those who wish to extend the NPT indefinitely and unconditionally and preferably without discussion. The idea seems to be "sign now and talk later". Any contract or agreement must be read carefully before being signed. Some of us would like to sign a blank cheque regarding the future development of nuclear arsenals: it is a very unusual procedure.

For many countries the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty (CTBT) is highly desirable as a means to ensure the success of the 1995 NPT Conference. In January of this year the Conference on Disarmament began negotiations which it is my honour to chair. The report which the Conference on Disarmament has submitted in this regard reflects the progress already achieved but it also reveals, in the appendix containing the rolling text of the treaty, that much still remains to be done. Hence the decision to reconvene the Ad Hoc Committee in November at the end of the First Committee's session. As was done during the negotiations on the chemical weapons Convention, we would be ready to take part in an informal meeting to inform the Committee on how the work in Geneva is proceeding.

The main outstanding issues are of fundamental importance: the scope of the prohibition and its verification system. The two are closely interrelated and require a prompt political decision if we are to bring the negotiations to a satisfactory conclusion.

Speaking as the representative of Mexico, I consider the results achieved thus far as significant but insufficient. We feel that we might perhaps have been able to make greater progress this year and even conclude the negotiations. In truth, the problem is not as complicated as some imagine: suffice it to consider who wants to carry out nuclear tests.

In each of the nuclear-weapon States there are undoubtedly those who would like to continue testing. In two of those countries, the United States and the Russian Federation, the decision has already been taken to suspend testing and to turn the ban into a permanent one through a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Another country cannot test as long as the United States maintains its unilateral moratorium. In a fourth country, a suspension has been decreed at the presidential level, and the fifth — the only one that has continued testing in recent years — is committed to achieving a CTBT no later than 1996. As far as we know there is no other country in the world that is thinking of beginning a nuclear-testing programme. It is true that a sixth country carried out a nuclear test in 1974, but the experience of the last two decades confirms that it has no intention of repeating it.

The foregoing is proof that a CTBT will affect the national- defence programmes of very few countries. It also demonstrates that there are important differences in their respective levels of nuclear development. In fact, it would seem that there are three that wish to achieve the levels of the two main nuclear Powers. At the same time, they all insist on the need to deny others access to their club. This results in not very convincing attempts to justify the possession of such weapons of mass destruction and to continue developing them.

The prompt conclusion of a CTBT would have a very favourable political impact on the future of the NPT. If the work in Geneva were to stagnate, we might take advantage of the other path open to us, the Amendment Conference of the partial test-ban Treaty. But we must also make progress in the conclusion of a multilateral agreement on negative security assurances. Moreover, the establishment of a committee on the drafting of a convention prohibiting the production of fissile material is still pending in the Conference on Disarmament. The latter question, which seemed to be resolved in the light of last year's resolution has become more complicated in 1994 as several aspects have become clearer. It has been proposed that the problem of the material already stockpiled and of plutonium in highly-enriched uranium for civilian purposes be considered. Here, as in other nuclear disarmament matters, it will be necessary to convince the international community of the value of turning a series of unilateral decisions into a multilateral treaty.

Mr. Hoffmann (Germany): On behalf of the European Union and of Austria, I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau most warmly on your election. I have no doubt that under your competent guidance the work of the First Committee will be carried out successfully. The European Union wishes to pledge its unreserved support in assisting with the fulfilment of your important and not always easy task.

The ideological division of the world, a source of deep mistrust and constant tension, has come to an end. Nevertheless, there remain great risks to peace and security in the world. I refer to the growing number of regional and internal conflicts, which have dreadful consequences for the people concerned, and to the dangers caused by the spread of weapons of mass destruction and the excessive stockpiling of conventional weapons.

The conflicts in the former Yugoslavia are a tragic example of the bloody excesses to which exaggerated nationalism can lead. The European Union has from the beginning been involved in the quest for a peaceful and lasting solution. With the United Nations we share the chairmanship of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, and play a major role in the efforts of the Contact Group. A large number of soldiers from countries of the European Union are doing a tremendous job in the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). Through the European Union monitoring mission we are contributing to the prevention and defusing of conflict situations and to the rebuilding of trust between the parties to the conflict. With the support of the Western European Union, we are also participating in the monitoring and implementation of the embargo and, with the European Union administration in Mostar, wish to give a signal for the reconciliation of the ethnic groups living in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. But we have to think beyond immediate measures geared towards a political settlement. Any future peace settlement in the former Yugoslavia needs to be complemented by an arms control process bolstering a peace settlement by stabilizing the situation, building confidence and preventing a renewed outbreak of armed conflict.

While the situation in the former Yugoslavia continues to cause concern, the peace process in the Middle East has progressed further in the last few months. This applies particularly to Israeli-Palestinian as well as Israeli-Jordanian relations. The signing of the Gaza and Jericho Agreement on 4 May 1994 in Cairo, which opened the way for Palestinian autonomy, represents a notable success both for the Israeli Government and for the Palestine Liberation Organization. The political leaders of both sides deserve respect and recognition for their far-sightedness and courage. In the same vein, the European Union welcomes

the Washington Declaration of 25 July 1994, signed by King Hussein of Jordan and Prime Minister Rabin of Israel. It represents another important breakthrough in the Middle East peace process.

We confirm our readiness to help ensure that the current momentum in the Middle East peace process is used to bring about further concrete progress and agreements. We feel that confidence-building measures form part of this process. We expect the new climate of reconciliation and of willingness to negotiate also to be reflected in the resolutions of this year's General Assembly.

After the end of East-West confrontation, arms control and disarmament continue to be of prime political importance. New sources and regions of tension have heightened concern about the worldwide proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

It is against this background that the European Union is deeply concerned about the events on the Korean peninsula. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has so far failed to eliminate doubts concerning the correctness and completeness of its initial declaration of nuclear materials and committed numerous violations of the safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It continues to be in non-compliance with its obligations under both the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the IAEA safeguards regime. We therefore urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply fully with these obligations. At the same time we support efforts to contribute to a reduction in tension on the Korean Peninsula through dialogue and we hope that such efforts will contribute to a solution of the nuclear issue which accords fully with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The non-proliferation Treaty continues to be the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation system. The strengthening of the global non-proliferation regime through the indefinite and unconditional extension of the non-proliferation Treaty lies in the security interest of all States. Furthermore, this extension is the basis for the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We are therefore committed to the indefinite and unconditional extension of the Treaty. The European Union has recently — in the framework of the Common Foreign and Security Policy — launched a joint action on the preparation for the 1995 review and extension Conference.

We welcome the recent advances towards universal adherence to the non-proliferation Treaty, in particular the accession of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Georgia, taking the number of its States parties to 165. We appeal to those States still outside the non-proliferation Treaty to accede to it as non-nuclear-weapon States and to conclude safeguards agreements with the IAEA. With regard to Ukraine we welcome the withdrawal of a substantial number of nuclear warheads to Russia. This constitutes effective disarmament on the basis of the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START I). We look forward to the accession of Ukraine to the non-proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon State at the earliest possible time, in accordance with the trilateral statement of 14 January 1994, with the Lisbon Protocol and with other previous agreements.

The European Union welcomes the substantial progress made in the Geneva negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. Our objective is to negotiate as a priority task and to conclude an effective, verifiable, multilateral and universally applicable comprehensive test-ban treaty which genuinely contributes to non-proliferation and disarmament.

The commitment of all States to participate seriously in the negotiations should lead to concrete results. It is encouraging in particular that the outline of a future treaty and its verification regime is taking shape. We are happy that members of the European Union have been able to play a major role in this regard. The European Union is supportive of the statements of France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States about the suspension of nuclear tests and is convinced that exercise of the utmost restraint in respect of nuclear testing would be consistent with the objective of international negotiation of a comprehensive test ban.

The European Union would welcome the initiation of negotiations on a universal, non-discriminatory and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear explosive devices — a cut-off treaty — in accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/75 L. We hope that at its next session the Conference on Disarmament will set up an ad hoc committee for this purpose.

As important supplier countries of nuclear technology and members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, we call on the other supplier countries to apply the IAEA full-scope safeguards requirements as a condition for supply and we urge all countries concerned to conclude full-scope

safeguards agreements. We appeal to all States which have not yet done so to participate in the voluntary reporting system of the IAEA on nuclear transfers as an additional contribution to strengthening the safeguards system.

Nuclear disarmament remains one of the highest priorities of the European Union in the field of arms control and disarmament. In this context, we attach particular importance to the implementation of existing disarmament agreements and commitments. To that effect we shall continue to cooperate with Russia and other successor States of the former Soviet Union in the difficult task of speeding up the process of elimination of their nuclear weapons in compliance with agreements concluded and commitments taken.

We note with satisfaction that the International Science and Technology Centre in Moscow, of which the European Union is a founding member, has started its operations. We expect that it will contribute substantially to the creation of civil career opportunities for scientists and engineers coming from the former Soviet Union who were previously employed in the military sector.

The European Union supports the strengthening of the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological and Toxin Weapons by the addition of an effective verification regime. Such a regime should help to promote the European Union's aim of wider adherence to that Convention.

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, now signed by 157 States and ratified by 14, represents one of the most significant and innovative disarmament agreements of the last decade. Through early ratification and careful preparation of their national measures for its implementation, signatory States should do everything in their power to ensure that this disarmament Treaty, which has taken so much time and effort to negotiate, will soon enter into force and display its full benefits. The prospect of imminent entry into force would give fresh impetus to the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in the Hague. Experts and working groups have found practical solutions to numerous problems, although many others remain unresolved. These should be settled as soon as possible.

Together with other like-minded countries we are already controlling exports of chemical-weapons-related substances and technology. In our opinion these controls are in full accord with the letter and spirit of the chemical weapons Convention, and they will contribute to ensuring that the goals of the chemical weapons Convention are attained. We undertake to review these controls in the light of the implementation of the Convention, for the benefit of States parties to the Convention acting in full compliance with their obligations under the Convention.

We consider the Missile Technology Control Regime to be an effective and useful instrument for preventing the proliferation of delivery systems for weapons of mass destruction. We support a strengthening of that Regime and appeal to all States which have not yet done so to adhere to its guidelines on a voluntary basis.

The United Nations can look back on a successful year in eliminating Iraq's potential for weapons of mass destruction in accordance with United Nations Security Council resolution 687 (1991). The Special Commission entrusted with the taskhas succeeded, with considerable support from European Union member States, in largely neutralizing Iraq's prohibited arms programmes. We look forward to the introduction of a long-term verification system, as envisaged in Security Council resolution 715 (1991) and accepted by the Iraqi Government in 1993. The United Nations is thereby making an important contribution to preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the region. This action will need to be followed by further steps.

The European Union is convinced that transparency in armaments is an important factor in the creation of a climate of trust between States, particularly at the regional level. In this regard, we can look back on a very successful experience within the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). On a global level, we therefore attach major importance to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. The implementation of the Register so far is encouraging, but is not entirely satisfactory. In the first year of its existence, 90 States, including all member States of the European Union, made declarations to the United Nations Register. We hope for higher figures in the future and appeal to all States which have not yet made declarations to contribute to the widest possible participation in the Register. This also applies to States which have no exports or imports to declare, since even a nil return represents an important contribution to greater transparency in the field of worldwide arms transfers. The European Union supports the work that has been achieved on transparency in the framework of the Conference on Disarmament, and

considers it necessary that this topic should remain on the agenda of the Conference.

The European Union welcomes the recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts on the continuing operation of the Register. The European Union notes with regret that, although the New York Group reaffirmed the goal of early expansion of the Register by the inclusion of data on military holdings and procurement through national production, it could not at this juncture reach consensus on such inclusion at the same level as for transfers. The European Union and its member States express their continued support for the further development of the Register and emphasize the importance of including data on military holdings and procurement through national production to make the Register comprehensive and capable of attracting the widest possible participation. We therefore consider it necessary that the functioning and further development of the Register should be reviewed in 1996, by a new group of governmental experts, with a view to its early expansion. The European Union urges all States Members of the United Nations to cooperate to this end.

The European Union considers transparency and responsibility regarding the transfer of arms and dual-use goods and technologies to be important in the promotion of peace and international security. The European Union is about to adopt a reinforced system of control of dual-use items. Together with other countries, we are pressing for effective export controls.

Regional arrangements within the meaning of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter can make an essential contribution to strengthening security. The CSCE is a good illustration of this. The Security Forum, a body for negotiation and dialogue, brings all the CSCE member States into the discussions on conventional arms control, the behaviour of States in their security relations, and regional security and non-proliferation matters. We welcome the adoption by the Security Forum on 25 November 1993 of four texts on military cooperation and contacts, defence planning, regional stabilization measures in times of crisis, and the principles governing conventional arms transfers. With a view to the CSCE summit to be held in Budapest on 5 and 6 December 1994, we hope that the Security Forum will be able to adopt, *inter alia*, a code of conduct for States in their security relations which is concise and operational and centred on politico-military questions, based on the European Union proposal of 30 June 1993, and a clear commitment by all CSCE member States to achieve harmonization of the conventional disarmament agreements in Europe and a mandate enabling the Forum to continue to negotiate in this area after the Budapest meeting.

Our experience in adopting the principles governing conventional arms transfers in the CSCE has encouraged us to think there would be value in the adoption of similar principles on a global basis, with a view to promoting responsibility in conventional arms transfers. The dangers of instability in many parts of the world are increasing and there has been a growing recognition of the need to promote greater restraint and responsibility in transfers of conventional weapons. It should be understood that such a measure on conventional arms transfers should take into account the purposes and principles of the United Nations set forth in the Charter, including the right of States to acquire arms to exercise their inherent right to self-defence. In this context, the European Union, together with some countries of Central and Eastern Europe, intends to submit a draft resolution concerning a code of conduct for conventional arms transfers.

Regional confidence-building and disarmament are also gaining momentum in other regions of the world. The European Union particularly welcomes the fact that Argentina, Chile and Brazil have now ratified the Treaty of Tlatelolco with its amendments and deposited the necessary instruments for the immediate entry into force of the Treaty on their territory. We also note the progress achieved in drafting the treaty on an African nuclear-weapon-free zone. We also welcome the discussion on regional disarmament and confidence-building efforts in the framework of the newly-established regional forum of the Association of South-East Asian Nations. The European Union supports non-proliferation and confidence-building measures in South Asia.

Bearing in mind the guidelines and recommendations on regional disarmament adopted at the 1993 session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, the European Union is looking forward to further initiatives in the field of regional disarmament and confidence-building.

Every day, throughout the world, civilians, including children, are maimed and killed by land-mines which make whole tracts of land uninhabitable as a consequence of armed conflicts. The European Union therefore welcomes the progress made at the Geneva expert discussions on a new version of Protocol II to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. We appeal to all States to participate in the Review Conference

planned for September/October 1995. We welcome the decision of several States, including mine-producing States, to impose export moratoria for anti-personnel mines, and commit ourselves to working against the uncontrolled proliferation of land-mines worldwide. In the context of the follow-up of resolution 48/7, entitled "Assistance in mine clearance", we welcome the establishment of a United Nations voluntary trust fund to assist, especially in information and training programmes relating to mine clearance, and to facilitate the launching of mine-clearance operations.

In the context of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects, members of the European Union are greatly concerned at the development of new conventional-weapons systems and are prepared to study proposals governing them.

The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, which provides for the elimination of roughly 50,000 conventional-weapons systems by 1995, is a cornerstone of the European security architecture and a successful example of regional disarmament. The European Union is committed to full implementation of the Treaty and considers that the Budapest CSCE summit should aim at reaffirming this commitment. The full implementation of this Treaty will enable the CSCE to make further progress in the field of arms control.

We also attach great importance to the Treaty on Open Skies, which in our view represents a unique confidence-building measure. We will continue to work for its early entry into force.

The new international climate is both an opportunity and a challenge. It is also a challenge to our readiness to organize appropriate discussions of, and practical approaches to, the disarmament and security problems of the present and the future. In this context, we attach overriding importance to a significant expansion of the membership of the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament, in particular at a time when substantial negotiations are taking place on disarmament and non-proliferation issues. We regret that it has not yet been possible to reach a consensus on such an expansion in the Disarmament Conference. The States members of the European Union will be tireless in their efforts to achieve their objective of a significant expansion. The Union is of the opinion that the most practical solution would be for all countries which have applied to date to be accepted without delay.

At its forty-eighth session the General Assembly adopted unanimously a resolution on the rationalization of the work of the First Committee which was based on an initiative of the European Union. On 14 September, this resolution was complemented by a General Assembly decision on the organization of the work of the First Committee. We shall support you, Mr. Chairman, to the best of our abilities in your efforts to give effect to both the resolution and the decision during the current session of the First Committee. In doing so, we wish to help seize the opportunity I spoke of to reduce tensions and find solutions to conflicts, so that our world can become a more peaceful and secure place.

Mr. Starr (Australia): May I congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of this Committee. My delegation looks forward to cooperating with you and to working under your wise guidance towards the achievement of the Committee's common goals. Our congratulations go also to the other members of the Bureau.

The most remarkable human imprint on this planet visible to the human eye from outer space is said to be the Great Wall of China. It is stark evidence of that most basic and powerful human imperative, the urge to join together in the building of defensive structures to protect our peace and secure development — in short, to build for peace.

As we embark again on our annual deliberations in the First Committee, let me assure members that my delegation approaches our arms control, disarmament and international security agenda drawing on the same profound motivation. What occupies us here is our common striving towards international laws, norms, agreements and arrangements designed to minimize threats to our security, to promote confidence and mutual trust and to create frameworks for ongoing dialogue and cooperation, for these are our building blocks, the vital multilateral components of our collective peace-building.

Ever since their invention some 50 years ago, nuclear weapons and their proliferation have proved to be one of the most fundamental security issues. The very best minds of our age have laboured long and hard to deal with the military, political and moral conundrums they have raised and to set in place legal and political norms pointing in the direction of a world which will at some stage be purged of nuclear weapons.

In recent years, there have been dramatic and far-reaching, indeed historic, steps to reverse the nuclear arms race. This profound improvement must be counted, but at this meeting I will focus on a review of the current status of the global multilateral components of nuclear security as it applies to us all.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has proved itself to be, and remains, the single most effective global security regime in force today. Over the last quarter of a century, it has provided the international community with its front line of defence against the spread of nuclear weapons and with a secure foundation for both international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and international nuclear commerce. The Treaty has thus made a vital contribution to international security, nuclear trade and nuclear cooperation.

The non-proliferation Treaty incorporates the only commitment from the five nuclear-weapon States to complete nuclear disarmament. With the removal of the obstacles posed by the cold war, impressive and tangible progress is being achieved. Next year's review Conference gives us the opportunity to secure the Treaty's benefits in perpetuity. The Australian Government firmly believes that this is an opportunity we must grasp decisively if we are to shape a world in which our collective commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and to a world free of nuclear weapons can be realized. Indefinite extension of the Treaty will create an environment in which the pressures for continued nuclear disarmament will be maximized, in which nuclear proliferation can be prevented, in which trade and cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy can be maintained, and in which the goal of universal acceptance of the norms set out in the Treaty can best be achieved.

Many States parties have therefore, like Australia, publicly committed themselves to seeking such an extension and have reflected this in their general debate statements to the plenary Assembly. In our own region, we welcomed and joined with the South Pacific Forum's endorsement of this objective at its annual meeting in Brisbane.

We will be looking to the 1995 Conference for all States parties freely and sincerely to reaffirm their indefinite commitment to the Treaty and to its effective and unconditional implementation in all aspects. For Australia, that implies an undiluted, ungrudging and effective commitment to the principles of nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as spelt out in the Treaty. We are demonstrably as committed to the indefinite extension and enhanced implementation of articles IV and VI as we are to the nuclear non-proliferation obligations contained in articles I, II and III. The 1995 Conference will give us the opportunity to strengthen the operation and effectiveness of the Treaty, undertaking the practical refurbishment needed to keep its mechanisms effective and its defences against nuclear proliferation relevant.

We welcome the steady accession of new members, emphasizing that now only a handful of countries remain outside the Treaty. In parallel, Australia welcomes the recent announcements by Cuba of its intention to accede to and bring into force the Treaty of Tlatelolco, thus solidifying the deep commitment of the Latin American region to nuclear non-proliferation. We similarly welcome the sustained and impressive efforts of African countries to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone treaty for the African region.

We warmly commend the example of those who acceded to the non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) in the past year and call upon those still finalizing their accession or with safeguards agreements still outstanding to conclude these expeditiously.

We remain deeply concerned that, on the eve of the 1995 Conference, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains in non-compliance with its International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards obligations, despite the best efforts of the Agency and of the international community to rectify the situation. We call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to respect and fully implement the solemn nuclear non-proliferation undertakings to which it freely subscribed. We look to the General Assembly to provide an unequivocal indication of the international community's support for the IAEA in its impartial application of the verification measures accepted by all States parties to the non-proliferation Treaty and of its firm expectation of a speedy return to compliance.

Australia is delighted that, spurred on by last year's historic consensus resolution on a comprehensive test-ban treaty (CTBT), the Conference on Disarmament commenced negotiations promptly in 1994 and has been able to pass to this Committee a rolling text representing substantial and intensive work. The text is comprehensive in scope. This is a positive outcome for some 26 weeks of negotiation, and we acknowledge the active and positive contributions made to the negotiation by nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States alike.

That being said, it is clear that important work remains to be done. For its part, while setting no deadlines, Australia seeks the production in early 1995 of a text that, though it may still be short of final completion, is nevertheless comprehensive in scope and coherent in structure, and that is credibly close to conclusion. We think that, in order to be credible, the text should by that stage reflect and incorporate substantial political closure on the major issues and demonstrate a clear commitment on the part of all negotiators to maintain negotiations towards a timely conclusion in the near future.

In endorsing and encouraging an intensified negotiating effort, my delegation will be pleased once again to join with the delegations of Mexico and New Zealand in promoting the resolution, in which we hope this Committee will make clear the high priority that the entire international community accords to the negotiations. We are not advocating a hasty, careless or superficial approach to these negotiations, but a deliberate, orderly and concerted effort to close the remaining gaps in our endeavours. It would be unforgivable for us to fritter away the opportunity that the end of the cold war, the consensus to ban testing and the restraint in testing demonstrated by most nuclear-weapon States has afforded us to achieve the long- sought-after disarmament and non-proliferation benefits of a comprehensive test ban.

In this context, Australia has expressed particular disappointment over continued Chinese testing, which has been condemned by Australian ministers. Australia is absolutely opposed to nuclear testing and the participation in the nuclear-arms race that this necessarily implies. We consider it essential that the utmost restraint in testing be exercised by the nuclear-weapon States as negotiations reach a critical stage in 1995. China's continued testing is out of step with the positive atmosphere of the negotiations and does not easily coincide with its own principled support for nuclear disarmament or with its commitment to negotiate a comprehensive test-ban treaty by 1996.

Security assurances — both positive and negative — remain relevant in a post-cold war world where nuclear weapons remain a fact of life and where doctrines on the use of nuclear weapons are under renewed scrutiny. The nuclear-weapon States have a special responsibility to exercise leadership and to provide a credible response to the reasonable expectations of the international community, the vast majority of which have already provided nuclear non-aggression assurances by way of non-proliferation Treaty and comparable non-proliferation undertakings. My delegation considers that this responsibility requires the development of a security assurances arrangement that is binding and that represents a significant "value-added" advance on the existing unilateral assurances.

We think that a Security Council resolution could be crafted so as to set in place a new and universal legal rule prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States that are parties to the non-proliferation Treaty or to comparable multilateral non-proliferation undertakings and that are in compliance with the full-scope nuclear safeguards that verify these undertakings. Such a resolution, once passed, would take immediate and universal effect and could have an international legal status comparable to a multilateral treaty, if drafted so as to reflect an intention to bind Security Council members and other United Nations Members, drawing on the Council's authority as granted by the United Nations Charter. The resolution could provide updated and more explicit positive security assurances, recognizing the importance to certain regions of confidence that the Security Council, especially its permanent members, will act decisively in the event of nuclear aggression or threats of such aggression. In the Pacific region, these steps could be usefully complemented by accession by all nuclear-weapon States to the relevant protocols of the Treaty of Rarotonga, in line with assurances given in similar circumstances to other regions.

My delegation was greatly encouraged by our common achievement, at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly, of consensus — for the first time — on the need to negotiate a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Capping the further production for explosive purposes of fissile material — the essential raw material for building nuclear weapons — is a disarmament objective that Australia has supported over many years. Putting such a cap in place will limit the scope of any future resumption of an uncontrolled nuclear arms race and of nuclear proliferation. It would enable the nuclear-weapon States and those few States not applying full-scope nuclear safeguards to join with verified commitments already subscribed to and applied by the vast majority of the international community.

The end of the cold war and the willingness of the nuclear-weapon States to call a halt to one of the fundamental mechanics of nuclear proliferation have finally placed cut-off within our grasp. We have therefore found it doubly disappointing that one or two non-nuclear-weapon States have so far found it impossible to commit themselves

to the negotiations that the entire international community called for last autumn on a basis that was careful not to prejudice the position of any State. We trust that this Committee will give a renewed indication of its seriousness of purpose on the matter and an endorsement of the necessary consensus approach.

The effort to secure the elimination of other weapons of mass destruction is progressing and should continue to receive the strongest international support. Australia welcomes the continuing good pace of work in The Hague to implement the chemical weapons Convention and the increasing number of ratifications now to hand as States parties complete the domestic preparations required for them to discharge their international obligations. Expert groups are dealing methodically with the host of technical detail that implementation of the Convention entails, and we are pleased to note that institution-building is proceeding satisfactorily.

Australia deposited its instrument of ratification for the Convention in May 1994. My delegation would urge other States signatory to the Convention to proceed expeditiously towards ratification and implementation, in particular those States that are still possessors of chemical weapons. We look to the United States and Russia to provide the same committed leadership in this as they displayed during the negotiations, recognizing the relevance, to implementation of the chemical weapons Convention, of their bilateral arrangements for chemical weapons destruction. Australia looks forward to the early entry into force of the Convention to enable the international community's expressed wish for chemical disarmament to be achieved, enhancing global security. Effective implementation of the Convention should help to facilitate trade and development in the chemical field, a key interest Australia shares with other prospective States parties to the Convention.

The recent, highly publicized outbreak of pneumonic plague in India has dramatically highlighted the degree to which our interconnected global community — and in particular the developing countries — remains open to the ravages of naturally occurring contagious diseases. Even more horrifying is the spectre of biological weapons. This spectre will remain with us as long as the biological weapons Convention of 1972 remains without a credible and effective verification regime.

The Special Conference of the States Parties to the biological weapons convention concluded by agreeing on a mandate for ongoing work that will permit the negotiation of legally binding compliance and verification arrangements capable of closing this gap. Unfortunately, agreement was not easily secured. The lesson was clear: we shall have to work hard to strengthen and focus the international political resolve that is needed if we are to address the challenge of biological weapons more effectively. As we stand poised to enter a new century, it is incumbent on us to strive to ensure that this particular Pandora's box of evil does not threaten our common future any longer.

Transparency in armaments is a key element in efforts to reduce mistrust and miscalculation in the security environment, and an important component of cooperative security as advocated by the Foreign Minister of Australia. An important step towards increased transparency was achieved through the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. While Australia regrets that the recent expert group was unable to reach consensus to expand the Register beyond transfers, it is important to strengthen this initial international exercise in transparency of conventional weaponry by seeking to ensure universal participation.

In this area of transparency more than most, regional efforts complement global measures. They constitute an important means of addressing the specific regional security context. The Asia-Pacific region has taken an important step forward this year in relation to cooperative security with the inaugural meeting of the Association of South-East Asian Nations Regional Forum, held in Bangkok on 25 July. Included in the proposals for further study before the second meeting in 1995 are a number of defence-related confidence-building measures, many of which are premised on the principle of transparency and all of which are tailored to the specific requirements of the region.

Important work was commenced this year in the group of experts on the 1981 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons. Australia advocates that Protocol II of that Convention, which deals with land-mines, should apply to non-international as well as to international conflicts. In Australia's view, mines should not be exported to States that are not party to Protocol II. We believe it is also vital that in future, anti-personnel mines should be detectable and incorporate a self-destruct mechanism to ensure that mines do not remain unexploded at the end of hostilities, threatening the lives and livelihood of the civilian population. These are useful protections for armed forces as well, and should apply whether the mine is remotely delivered or manually placed.

We must seek feasible but direct solutions to the horror of the literally millions of mines left in countries such as Cambodia, Afghanistan and Mozambique. Australia has provided mine-clearance teams in all three of these countries, but in the longer term we believe the only solution is the broad establishment of international standards along the practical and achievable lines we advocate.

There is a great need for action on land-mines, and the real concern of States and peoples provides an opportunity to strengthen the Convention and widen adherence. My Government urges all States that have not done so to accede to or ratify the Convention and to participate in this work.

Finally, let me say that we are disappointed that the issue of the expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament remains unresolved despite the significant amount of energy and creativity that has been put into finding a solution to this issue. As on issues of substance, the Conference must respond to the expectations of the international community regarding enhancement of the representativeness of the Conference through expanded membership. In the meantime, we welcome the active engagement of non-member States in the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. Steward (South Africa): It is a particular privilege, in view of an enforced absence from the Committee for many years, to be able today to offer my congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to your responsible office, and also to congratulate the Vice-Chairmen, from Austria and Japan, respectively. My delegation is well aware of the degree of dedication and expertise required to steer the deliberations of this Committee in a constructive direction in the interest of disarmament and world peace. My delegation offers its full cooperation and feels that in the light of the special circumstances obtaining, the Committee may be interested in the positions of the South African Government on the items now under consideration.

South Africa's Government of National Unity has committed itself to a policy of non-proliferation and arms control that covers all the weapons of mass destruction and extends to our concerns about the proliferation of conventional weapons. To implement this policy, South Africa is in the process of taking numerous substantive steps. It is our intention to be a responsible possessor of advanced technologies.

We are gratified that our position in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has been normalized, and we look forward to serving constructively on the Board of Governors.

South Africa became a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1991 and concluded a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA shortly thereafter. We became a member of the Zangger Committee in 1993. At that time we began to participate in the work of the Group of Experts designated by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Organization for African Unity, to finalize the drafting of a treaty or convention on the denuclearization of Africa. We wholeheartedly support the work of the Group of Experts, and the draft they have produced.

In this regard, I am happy to be in a position to offer, for consideration by the Committee and the authorities concerned, the designation of South Africa as the seat of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy once it is established.

South Africa is in favour of universal membership of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and calls on all States that have not joined the Treaty to do so at the earliest possible time. South Africa, in its position as the first country to have unilaterally and voluntarily dismantled an existing nuclear weapons programme, would specifically direct this appeal to the so-called "threshold" States, among which South Africa once was numbered. South Africa's experience has shown that a policy of complete transparency holds many benefits and, in fact, increases a country's security.

In 1993 South Africa also became a signatory to the chemical weapons Convention. We recently hosted an African regional seminar on national implementation of the Convention, at which representatives of 39 African States were present.

We are a State party to the biological weapons Convention. During 1993, South Africa for the first time submitted to the Secretary-General a report on confidence-building measures and it is preparing a more detailed declaration. While work is under way to develop a system of confidence-building measures for this Convention, we would call on all States to participate in the United Nations confidence-building measures. Our experts participated in the work of the Ad Hoc Group of Governmental Experts on verification (VEREX), and we were one of the countries that called for the convening of a special conference of

States parties to the Convention to be convened in 1995 to consider the measures adopted by VEREX. South Africa will continue to participate in this endeavour.

Our concerns also extend to the proliferation of conventional weapons. South Africa, in common with most Member States, has noted with abhorrence the terrible effects on civilian populations of the use of land-mines. In response to the call of the United Nations for States to impose a moratorium on the export of anti-personnel land-mines, we have declared an indefinite moratorium on the international marketing, transfer and export of all types of mines. I believe that this places South Africa in the vanguard in the world in this area.

I am also pleased to place on record that the South African Cabinet recently decided that South Africa should become a party to the Convention on Prohibition and Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons.

South Africa looks forward to the resolution of the last remaining problem to the enlargement of the Conference on Disarmament. This would enable South Africa, and others, to play the useful role we believe we are able to play.

By committing themselves fully to achieving disarmament and non-proliferation on a universal scale, the nations of the world can contribute to ending the scourge of war and the allocation of vast resources to weaponry that could be better used for the development of our world and the upliftment of our people, addressing what is perhaps the foremost human right.

The Chairman: I call next upon the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission to introduce the report of the Commission (A/49/42).

Mr. Mongbe (Benin) (*interpretation from French*): I wish first of all, Sir, to congratulate you on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. I am certain that your talent and commitment will bring us success in our work. My congratulations go also to the other Committee officers.

I cannot fail to pay tribute to last year's Chairman, Ambassador Adolf Ritter von Wagner of Germany, who directed our work at the forty-eighth session with such ability and deftness and who worked so hard on the rationalization of the work of the Committee.

It is my honour to introduce the 1994 report of the Disarmament Commission, of which I am the Chairman. The report (A/49/42) includes the conclusions reached at the Commission's organizational session and at its substantive session held at United Nations Headquarters between 18 April and 9 May 1994.

The agenda for the Commission's 1994 substantive session contained three items that were first the subject of a general exchange of views in plenary meeting and then of in-depth discussion in three working groups. The first item was "Process of nuclear disarmament in the framework of international peace and security, with the objective of the elimination of nuclear weapons"; it was considered by Working Group I, chaired by Ambassador Volodymyr D. Khandogy of Ukraine. The second was "The role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields"; it was considered by Working Group II, chaired by Ambassador Peggy Mason of Canada. The third item was "International arms transfers"; it was discussed in Working Group III under the chairmanship of Ambassador Luis Fernando Jaramillo of Colombia.

I shall summarize the results of these intensive deliberations in the Commission. The Disarmament Commission was unable to conclude its work on the item on nuclear disarmament. Consideration of the item was to have been concluded this year, but on the recommendation of Working Group I it will be included once again on the Commission's agenda, not only because of its complexity but also because of the ongoing negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on aspects of nuclear disarmament and the review conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Working Group II concluded its work on the role of science and technology, but did not reach consensus on a text setting out guidelines and recommendations owing to disagreement on the paragraph dealing with the transfer for peaceful purposes of high technology with dual — military and civilian — applications, within the context of existing agreements that should enjoy the broadest possible adherence. It is important to note that this disagreement arose because of differing views on the non-proliferation Treaty: perfect in the eyes of some, discriminatory in the eyes of others. It was therefore decided that the Commission would cease its consideration of this item, which was in its fourth year of deliberations.

As agreed at the organizational session, when it was included on the agenda, the item on international arms

transfers was kept strictly within the framework of General Assembly resolution 46/36 H, which stated the view that settlement of this problem would contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the diminishing of tensions, thereby promoting disarmament and socio-economic development. But owing to the breadth of this subject, there were still differences on the approach that should be adopted. Some delegations felt that discussion could be confined to illicit transfers, which might be defined as trade in arms that evades the control of national and international authorities. Others, on the other hand, wanted all aspects of the matter to be taken up, with particular emphasis on illicit trafficking, on the understanding that some aspects of this matter are now under consideration by the Conference on Disarmament and by the group of experts on the United Nations Register of Conventional Weapons. Still others felt that all aspects of the matter should be covered with a view to laying the groundwork for control of all classes of these weapons which are responsible for such suffering.

A working paper submitted by the Chairman of Working Group III is annexed to the report of the Commission. It is based on the preliminary views of delegations, and is not binding, but it could serve as a basis for future deliberations. The working paper suggests: that controlling the illicit transfer of weapons and military equipment of all kinds relates to the acquisition of arms by unauthorized persons as well as to exploitation and delivery; that strengthening international cooperation, especially in the framework of the United Nations, is necessary to that end; and that we must consider, for example, setting up a computerized systematic registry of missing or stolen weapons with a view to dealing quickly with anyone who tries to register or sell them.

Despite the considerable cerebrations of delegations, the 1994 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission, whose work is based on consensus, did not achieve the expected guidelines and recommendations on agenda items 1 and 2. Some delegations, disappointed but not discouraged, suggested abandoning the principle of consensus. Delegations in general are clear that the Commission is an important specialized deliberative body within the multilateral disarmament machinery, and hope that the Commission will be able with political will by all members to achieve substantive results on the items before it, which are important for world peace and security.

In the context of the normal activities of the Commission, it is already time — before the December 1994 organizational session — to think not only about the Bureau for 1995, whose chairmanship will go to the Group of Asian States, but also about the new agenda item for the 1995 substantive session. Without prejudging our choice of the new item, I should like to recall that in resolution 47/54 A the Assembly noted the support for the proposal to include an item entitled "General guidelines for non-proliferation, with special emphasis on weapons of mass destruction".

Another relevant item that might be worthy of attention would relate to implementation of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade. As we are already half way through the Decade, consideration of such an item in 1995 would enable us to set our priorities for multilateral disarmament for the next five years.

Members of the Bureau of the Disarmament Commission will soon submit a draft resolution on the report of the Commission to the General Assembly, and would welcome any comments or suggestions that might facilitate its adoption by consensus.

I would like to reiterate my conviction that by identifying points and measures of common interest we can truly guarantee the security of all. This includes the field of disarmament, which is a political process that moves forward by means of negotiation and persuasion.

In conclusion, I would like to pay tribute to all those who have in one way or another worked to ensure the smooth functioning of the Commission during my term of office. In particular I would like to thank all delegations for their willingness to cooperate, my colleagues on the Bureau for always being available, the Chairmen of the Working Groups for their determination, the Centre for Disarmament Affairs, under the dynamic leadership of Mr. Davinic, for its efficiency, the secretariat of the Commission, under the skilled leadership of my friend Mr. Lin, for its dedication, and the Conference Services staff for its patience and stamina.

Mr. Valle (Brazil): At the outset I wish to extend to you, Mr. Chairman, the warmest congratulations of the Brazilian delegation on your election. It is a matter of special satisfaction for us to see such a qualified and skilful diplomat from the sister nation of Ecuador in charge of our work in this important Committee of the General Assembly. I also wish to take this opportunity to express our congratulations to the Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur and to offer our collaboration to all.

As we approach half a century of United Nations activity in the promotion of peace and international security, we are convinced that the First Committee retains a fundamental role as a universal, multilateral forum for the consideration of some of the most pressing issues of our time. As new opportunities for increased solidarity among nations are afforded by history, we must assume a stronger commitment to attain the results that have eluded us for many decades in the field of disarmament.

As a country situated in one of the most disarmed regions of the world, Brazil stands ready to contribute to new, determined international efforts aimed at the adoption of effective measures in this Committee's field of competence. Although the challenges remain great, we believe that each and every nation has an important part to play in the building of a renewed sense of purpose, while recognizing that those States with the largest arsenals, whose actions can have the greatest impact in the field of disarmament, bear special responsibilities.

In the past few years a decrease in tension between the major Powers has led to the creation of more favourable conditions for the pursuit of our objective of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war. In this regard, it is my Government's view that this Committee should concentrate its attention on three main broad areas — namely, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, transparency in armaments, and the diffusion of science and technology for peaceful purposes. Work on these issues can provide us with the foundations for building peace on more just and longer-lasting terms.

The elimination of nuclear weapons should remain at the very top of our agenda. There are still enough nuclear weapons in the world for life on this planet to be destroyed many times over. Recent events have illustrated that nuclear-weapons proliferation remains a real and threatening possibility as long as such weapons of mass destruction exist and as long as a matrix exists. In order to eliminate the risk of proliferation of nuclear weapons, there can be no alternative but the destruction of all existing nuclear weapons. In this connection, Brazil considers that the international community should develop a truly comprehensive regime of non-proliferation and a complete ban on all arms of mass destruction on a universally accepted, fair and non-discriminatory basis.

Latin America's contribution to the preservation of international peace and security entitles it to speak with authority on this matter. As our Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Celso Amorim, stated in the general debate at the current session of the General Assembly,

> "Latin America has been a factor of international stability in a turbulent world. Our legal tradition, built through decades of efforts to regulate inter-American relations, represents a relevant contribution to the international community. As pioneers in the promotion of disarmament, we feel entitled to seek equivalent gestures from the entire international community, and in particular from the nuclear-weapon States." (*Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-ninth session, Plenary Meetings, 4th meeting, p. 5*)

Brazil has taken decisive steps to enhance the peaceful environment that has prevailed in Latin America. At the beginning of the current year the Brazilian Government ratified the quadripartite agreement signed with Argentina, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials to place all nuclear facilities in both countries under IAEA safeguards. In addition, Brazil has ratified the Treaty of Tlatelolco and worked with others to bring it fully into force. Through these and other initiatives we have reaffirmed our commitment to the worldwide prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in all its aspects and to the strengthening of international cooperation in our part of the world.

We follow with great interest developments in Africa which will, in all likelihood, soon keep another entire continent free of nuclear weapons. It is our wish to build upon the successful cooperation among nations in the South Atlantic to preserve this entire ocean for peaceful purposes through the initiative of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic. It is noteworthy in this context that the Third Meeting of the States of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic, held in Brasilia last September, adopted unanimously a declaration on the denuclearization of the South Atlantic.

Over recent decades the international flow of armaments reached massive levels as a result of the perverse logic of the cold war and its concomitant regional tensions. We believe that greater transparency in armaments can constitute a crucial confidence-building measure with a view to diminishing and even eliminating suspicion among States. The full operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms deserves to be hailed, in this context, as a most important multilateral initiative designed to promote transparency in armaments.

Brazil has actively participated in the establishment and consolidation of the Register and will continue to do so.

In addition, we find that the increased exchange of information on military expenditures contributes to the predictability of military activities, thus strengthening confidence among States on a global and regional level.

Along with what could be termed the "negative commitment" regarding non-proliferation and the "neutral commitment" towards greater transparency in armaments, Brazil is strongly in favour of a "positive commitment" directed at diffusing dual-use technologies for peaceful purposes. The international community should develop clear and universally acceptable guidelines for the application and transfer of sensitive technologies which should take into account legitimate requirements for the maintenance of international peace and security, while ensuring that they do not deny access to high-technology products, services and know-how for peaceful purposes.

We are firmly convinced that there is scope for developing a positive relationship between disarmament and development through scientific and technological cooperation. It is clear to us that the fruits of human endeavours in this field should benefit all mankind and that the expertise once harnessed for destructive purposes can and should be channelled into the promotion of economic growth and social well-being for an ever larger number of individuals throughout the world.

Brazil regrets the fact that during the last session of the Disarmament Commission delegations were unable to reach a final consensus on the draft guidelines and recommendations on the role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other, related fields. Despite the difficulties encountered in the efforts to achieve a successful conclusion to the work of the Commission, we deem it possible — indeed, necessary — to consolidate the areas of agreement and wide consensus achieved therein with a view to promoting follow-up on the subject in the appropriate forums, including this Committee.

The three broad areas that I have just outlined are, of course, related, and the connections between them must be duly taken into account in our deliberations. We should not lose sight of a wider perspective within which disarmament becomes, in turn, closely associated with the concepts of democracy and development, in so far as it constitutes one of the pillars of a more just and equitable international order.

We sincerely hope that in the coming weeks our joint efforts will bring us closer to achieving the common objective of promoting international peace and security as defined in the Charter. The Brazilian delegation stands ready to participate actively, constructively and productively in the work of this Committee.

Mr. Whannou (Benin) *(interpretation from French)*: In his capacity as current Chairman of the Disarmament Commission, the head of the delegation of Benin has already conveyed to you, Mr. Chairman, our delegation's congratulations. However, I should like for my part to say how pleased my delegation is at the way in which you, Mr. Chairman, are directing our work.

The delegation of Benin is grateful to the Secretary-General for his preliminary statement. I should like to take the opportunity provided by this general debate to give a brief outline of my Government's views on some agenda items relating to the problem of disarmament and international security. The ending of the war of ideologies has removed the risk of worldwide confrontation and has created favourable conditions for world peace and security. However, there are still obstacles in the way of any lasting qualitative transformation on the basis of concord and stability, and it is essential that there be unceasing efforts to secure world peace through the elimination of aggressive capacities.

We must welcome the positive developments at various levels in the matter of the control and limitation of armaments. Resolute pursuit of our common disarmament efforts should make it possible to release the peace dividends and to use the funds thus saved to finance development as the foundation of peace — something that was emphasized by the Secretary-General in his 1994 report on the work of the Organization.

Not only shall we try to make progress in the process of nuclear disarmament, but we must also continue with programmes for the destruction of these weapons and their delivery vehicles. We must also strengthen confidence-building measures, such as transparency in the military field, with a view to developing measures for the control and limitation of armaments.

We have a common interest in seeing mankind rid of nuclear weapons, the very existence of which constitutes a serious threat to the security of all. Hence the need to abandon the policy of nuclear deterrence, which merely perpetuates nuclear tension. This policy is rendered obsolete particularly by the fact that the present

international situation favours cooperation. Without doubt, there are positive developments in sight. I am thinking in particular of the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, of a convention that would ban the production of fissile materials for use in nuclear weapons, and of an agreement to protect non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of the use of such weapons.

We anxiously await the conclusion of negotiations that were initiated by the Conference on Disarmament. In particular, we are grateful to the Governments of Australia and Sweden for their submission of draft treaties on the cessation of all nuclear tests. We would approve any universal treaty that was multilaterally and effectively verifiable.

Benin also attaches considerable importance to the question of strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime. This should be part and parcel of the process of securing the total elimination of these weapons, which is why we believe that the 1995 review Conference of the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons should contribute to strengthening that regime. If the non-proliferation Treaty is to be strengthened, it must be made more nearly universal. This implies the accession of the largest possible number of the States that are currently hindered from acceding because of the discriminatory nature of the Treaty.

Furthermore, the International Atomic Energy Agency's safeguards should cover objective and not selective control of all high technology for dual use in the civilian and military fields, as well as obligatory reporting of suspect civilian nuclear plants. Sanctions should also be imposed on those who are intent on misinformation. Hence, we believe that there should be a revision of the non-proliferation Treaty that can be seen only in the context of a limited extension of the Treaty of 1968.

To be effective, global disarmament measures should be supplemented by regional arrangements, such as the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones or denuclearized zones. In this context, we would welcome the early entry into force of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which has been open for signature since 1967. This Treaty, which deals with the denuclearization of Latin America and the Caribbean, must be acceded to by all States in the region if it is to be strengthened.

With the advent of a new, united, multiracial, democratic South Africa, which has made a clear commitment not to acquire nuclear weapons, the conclusion of a treaty related to the implementation of the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa adopted by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1964 is now certain. The draft of that treaty is now in its final stage. The participants in the most recent OAU summit, which was held in Tunis, felt that the group of experts should now take up the question of the geographical delimitation of that particular area. Africa knows that it can continue to rely on the support of Member States for the completion of this draft.

In order to avoid any military imbalance between regions, we would encourage the other parts of the world to overcome any obstacles in the way of their denuclearization. We would like to refer, in the same context, to the fact that the third Ministerial Meeting of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic, which was held in Brasilia, Brazil, on 21 and 27 September 1994 adopted, among other conclusions, guarantees for the security, survival and individual and collective well-being of the area in the form of a declaration on the denuclearization of the South Atlantic, a maritime region of strategic and economic importance in the world.

We should continue our efforts to eliminate other weapons of mass destruction such as chemical and biological weapons. The biological weapons Convention, which has been in force since 1975, should be strengthened, especially in view of the fact that it does not contain verification provisions guaranteeing its full-scale application. We support the proposals made by the Ad Hoc Group of Governmental Experts on verification, which advocated *inter alia* an exchange of information and on-site inspections.

With respect to the chemical weapons Convention, which is expected to come into force in 1995, we must ensure that its implementation contributes to the use of technology and chemical products for peaceful purposes of social and economic development.

Throughout the world mines are endangering civilian populations. At present, the United Nations is, to its credit, turning resolutely to the dangerous task of mine clearance. It is encouraging that there is a moratorium on the export of mines pending the convening and conclusions of the Review Conference of parties to the Convention on the use of certain conventional weapons, particularly Protocol II, on prohibitions or restrictions on the use of mines, booby-traps and other devices. We congratulate the Group of Governmental Experts which has been preparing for this Conference on its interim report. This Review Conference

will give us the opportunity to endow the Convention with the force it needs to be effective. To this end, the Convention should contain measures of effective control or verification, and bans and limitations on both the production and export of these devices.

In connection with the role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields, it is clear from the report of the Disarmament Commission (A/49/42) — whose deliberations, among others, are paving the way for negotiations on multilateral disarmament agreements — that there was no consensus on a text containing guidelines and recommendations on the role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and allied fields. There was disagreement on the paragraph dealing with the transfer for peaceful purposes of high technology used for both military and civilian purposes. In the view of my delegation, it would be in the interest of the harmonious development of mankind — and a matter of importance — to encourage international cooperation in the use of science and technology through transfers and the exchange of technical and scientific know-how for peaceful purposes, in order to promote sustainable development and maintain international security.

In order to achieve progress in the disarmament process, it is important to have recourse to collateral measures such as transparency in military areas. These measures will make it possible to dispel concerns, fear, suspicion and tension, and therefore reduce the risk of military confrontation which results from an excessive accumulation of weapons. That is why the area of application of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms should be expanded so that it may benefit from the support of the largest possible number of States and be made effective.

In conclusion, the question of the control and limitation of weapons is one of the challenges before us at a time when the United Nations is approaching an important turning-point in its history, with the celebration in 1995 of its fiftieth anniversary. If the United Nations is to be able to meet this challenge by establishing common measures, taking into account the security concerns of all, it is up to us to take the necessary steps, such as adapting the multilateral negotiation machinery to the realities of the present day in order to make it possible for progress to be made in this lengthy political process of disarmament. Furthermore, we should consider either holding a special session of the General Assembly or undertaking an examination of the implementation of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade, in order to evaluate what has been achieved in the disarmament field and to establish our priorities for the coming years.

The delegation of Benin would like to emphasize that we should avoid any initiative which could be counter-productive and which might necessitate a legal ruling from the International Court of Justice on questions which are essentially political in nature, such as those of the legality of the use or a threat of the use of nuclear weapons. At the appropriate time my delegation will reiterate the views of our Government on this initiative which, in the current context of ongoing negotiations, is not likely to facilitate progress in the cause of general and complete disarmament under international control.

The Chairman: In view of the large number of delegations on the list of speakers I again appeal to all representatives to limit their statements to 10 minutes. This will enable us to conclude our general debate in accordance with the programme of work and timetable we adopted earlier.

Election of the Rapporteur

The Chairman: You will recall that at our organizational meeting on Thursday, 5 October, I informed you that consultations were still being held on the candidacy for the post of Rapporteur of the Committee. I am happy to inform you that following those consultations we are now in a position to proceed to the election of the Rapporteur.

I now call on the representative of Burkina Faso to present the nomination.

Mr. Serme (Burkina Faso) *(interpretation from French)*: At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your distinguished election as Chairman of the First Committee. I would also like to pay a well-deserved tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Adolf von Wagner, who made a valuable contribution to our work at the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

The delegation of Burkina Faso has the honour to nominate Mr. Peter Goosen of the Republic of South Africa for the office of Rapporteur of the First Committee. Mr. Goosen, who was born in Johannesburg in May 1956, is currently Deputy Director in the Department of Foreign Affairs and is responsible for the Department dealing with non-proliferation and weapons control. Before assuming that eminent responsibility, Mr. Goosen served in various posts of no less importance. Suffice it to mention that in

1982 he was given responsibility for training junior officers in the Department of Foreign Affairs in South Africa. From 1983 to 1987 he served as Third Secretary of the South African Embassy in London. From 1987 to 1989 he was head of the Bureau of Political Affairs in the Department, while serving also as Private Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs. From 1989 to 1991, Mr. Goosen served as First Secretary of the Embassy of South Africa in Washington.

Mr. Goosen received a diploma from Pietermaritzburg University in Natal where he studied economics and political science in 1977. In 1979 he received his Bachelor of Law degree from the same University. His academic and professional experience has been supplemented by many training seminars in areas ranging from finance management, computer science and languages. The nomination of Mr. Goosen would serve as a dual symbol of the new South Africa and of African youth. We consider therefore that the First Committee that has always worked for the benefit of Africa and to ensure a secure future for youth will indeed endorse his candidacy.

The Chairman: I thank the representative of Burkina Faso for the nomination of Mr. Peter Goosen of South Africa for election to the post of Rapporteur of the First Committee.

On behalf of the First Committee and on my own behalf, I would request that representative to convey our sincere gratitude to Mr. Macaire Kabore for the important contribution he made to the work of the Committee during the forty-eighth session as Rapporteur of the Committee.

Members of the Committee have just heard the representative of Burkina Faso nominate Mr. Peter Goosen for election to the post of Rapporteur. As there are no other nominations, I take it that the Committee wishes to follow the same procedure as before and dispense with the secret ballot and declare Mr. Goosen elected Rapporteur of the First Committee by acclamation.

It was so decided.

The Chairman: I wish to express my most sincere and cordial congratulations to Mr. Goosen, the representative of South Africa, upon his election as Rapporteur of the First Committee.

Mr. Steward (South Africa): South Africa greatly appreciated the confidence shown by the African Group in nominating Mr. Peter Goosen for the post of Rapporteur of the Committee and the competent introduction by the representative of Burkina Faso.

South Africa is honoured to receive the unanimous support of the Committee for its candidate for the post. I regard this as particularly symbolic in the light of developments in South Africa — first the remarkable peaceful transition to a democratic government and, more pertinently, to the unprecedented — I repeat, unprecedented — dismantling of a nuclear-weapons programme and destruction of existing nuclear devices.

We had not anticipated early enough that South Africa would be called to this important office and consequently our expert who is coming from South Africa will be unable to assume his responsibilities until later this week. May I, however, on your Rapporteur's behalf, assure the Committee of his full cooperation.

Statement by the Chairman

The Chairman: I would like to remind the Committee that, in accordance with its decision, as reflected in its programme of work and timetable, the list of speakers for the general debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items will be closed this afternoon at 6 p.m. I urge those delegations wishing to participate in the general debate to inscribe their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.